

# IN DIVERS TONES

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✓

To My Friend,

EDMUND COLLINS.

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*In divers tones I sing,  
And pray you, Friend, give ear!  
My medley of song I bring  
You, who can rightly hear.*

*Themes gathered far and near,  
Thoughts from my heart that spring,  
In divers tones I sing,  
And pray you, Friend, give ear!*

*Here's many a serious thing—  
You'll know if it's sincere.  
Where the light laughters ring  
You may detect a tear.  
In divers tones I sing,  
And pray you, Friend, give ear!*



## CONTENTS.

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	PAGE
DEDICATION . . . . .	iii
COLLECT FOR DOMINION DAY . . . . .	i
CANADA . . . . .	2
ACTÆON . . . . .	6
IN THE AFTERNOON . . . . .	16
THE PIPES OF PAN . . . . .	21
BEFORE THE BREATH OF STORM . . . . .	26
OUT OF POMPEII . . . . .	27
TO FREDERICTON IN MAY-TIME . . . . .	31
IN SEPTEMBER . . . . .	32
CONCERNING CUTHBERT THE MONK . . . . .	33
IMPULSE . . . . .	39
THE ISLES—AN ODE . . . . .	41
A SERENADE . . . . .	44

OFF PELORUS . . . . .	46
A BALLADE OF CALYPSO . . . . .	49
RAIN . . . . .	51
MIST . . . . .	52
THE TANTRAMAR REVISITED . . . . .	53
THE SLAVE WOMAN . . . . .	59
THE MARVELLOUS WORK . . . . .	60
A SONG OF DEPENDENCE . . . . .	63
ON THE CREEK . . . . .	65
LOTOS . . . . .	69
THE SOWER . . . . .	71
THE POTATO HARVEST . . . . .	72
AFLOAT . . . . .	73
RECKONING . . . . .	78
IN NOTRE DAME . . . . .	79
NOCTURNE . . . . .	82
TIDES . . . . .	84
CONSOLATION . . . . .	85
DARK . . . . .	86
THE FOOTPATH . . . . .	87

# Contents.

vii

TOUT OU RIEN . . . . .	89
SALT . . . . .	90
KHARTOUM . . . . .	92
LIBERTY. ( <i>From the French of Fréchette.</i> ) . . . .	93
TO THE MEMORY OF SIDNEY LANIER . . . . .	95
ON READING THE POEMS OF SIDNEY LANIER . . .	97
IN LANG'S "HELEN OF TROY." (TO BLISS CARMAN.)	98
A BALLADE OF PHILOMELA . . . . .	99
A HERALD . . . . .	101
WINTER GERANIUMS . . . . .	102
A BREATHING TIME . . . . .	103
BIRCH AND PADDLE. (TO BLISS CARMAN.) . . .	105
AN ODE FOR THE CANADIAN CONFEDERACY . . .	109
THE QUELLING OF THE MOOSE . . . . .	111
A SONG OF REGRET . . . . .	114
THE DEPARTING OF CLOTE SCARP . . . . .	116
A BREAK . . . . .	119
TO A LADY, AFTER HEARING HER READ KEATS'	
"NIGHTINGALE" . . . . .	121
RONDEAU. (TO LOUIS HONORE FRÉCHETTE.) . .	122



A BIRTHDAY BALLADE . . . . .	123
TO S— M—. . . . .	125
LA BELLE TROMBONISTE . . . . .	127
THE POET IS BIDDEN TO MANHATTAN ISLAND . .	130
THE BLUE VIOLET . . . . .	133

## IN DIVERS TONES.

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### *COLLECT FOR DOMINION DAY.*

FATHER of nations! Help of the feeble hand!  
Strength of the strong! to whom the nations kneel!  
Stay and destroyer, at whose just command  
Earth's kingdoms tremble and her empires reel!  
Who dost the low uplift, the small make great,  
And dost abase the ignorantly proud,  
Of our scant people mould a mighty state,  
To the strong, stern, — to Thee in meekness bowed!  
Father of unity, make this people one!  
Weld, interfuse them in the patriot's flame, —  
Whose forging on thine anvil was begun  
In blood late shed to purge the common shame;  
That so our hearts, the fever of faction done,  
Banish old feud in our young nation's name.

*CANADA.*

O CHILD of Nations, giant-limbed,  
Who stand'st among the nations now  
Unheeded, unadored, unhymned,  
With unanointed brow, —

How long the ignoble sloth, how long  
The trust in greatness not thine own?  
Surely the lion's brood is strong  
To front the world alone!

How long the indolence, ere thou dare  
Achieve thy destiny, seize thy fame —  
Ere our proud eyes behold thee bear  
A nation's franchise, nation's name?

The Saxon force, the Celtic fire,  
These are thy manhood's heritage !  
Why rest with babes and slaves ? Seek higher  
The place of race and age.

I see to every wind unfurled  
The flag that bears the Maple-Wreath ;  
Thy swift keels furrow round the world  
Its blood-red folds beneath ;

Thy swift keels cleave the furthest seas ;  
Thy white sails swell with alien gales ;  
To stream on each remotest breeze  
The black smoke of thy pipes exhales.

O Falterer, let thy past convince  
Thy future, — all the growth, the gain,  
The fame since Cartier knew thee, since  
Thy shores beheld Champlain !

Montcalm and Wolfe ! Wolfe and Montcalm !  
Quebec, thy storied citadel  
Attest in burning song and psalm  
How here thy heroes fell !

O Thou that bor'st the battle's brunt  
At Queenston, and at Lundy's Lane, —  
On whose scant ranks but iron front  
The battle broke in vain! —

Whose was the danger, whose the day,  
From whose triumphant throats the cheers,  
At Chrysler's Farm, at Chateauguay,  
Storming like clarion-bursts our ears?

On soft Pacific slopes, — beside  
Strange floods that northward rave and fall, —  
Where chafes Acadia's chainless tide —  
Thy sons await thy call.

They wait; but some in exile, some  
With strangers housed, in stranger lands; —  
And some Canadian lips are dumb  
Beneath Egyptian sands.

O mystic Nile! Thy secret yields  
Before us; thy most ancient dreams  
Are mixed with far Canadian fields  
And murmur of Canadian streams.

*Canada.*

5

But thou, my Country, dream not thou !  
Wake, and behold how night is done, —  
How on thy breast, and o'er thy brow,  
Bursts the uprising sun !

*ACTÆON.*

A WOMAN OF PLATÆA SPEAKS.

I HAVE lived long, and watched out many days,  
And seen the showers fall and the light shine down  
Equally on the vile and righteous head.  
I have lived long, and served the gods, and drawn  
Small joy and liberal sorrow, — scorned the gods,  
And drawn no less my little meed of good,  
Suffered my ill in no more grievous measure.  
I have been glad — alas, my foolish people,  
I have been glad with you ! And ye are glad,  
Seeing the gods in all things, praising them  
In yon their lucid heaven, this green world,  
The moving inexorable sea, and wide  
Delight of noonday, — till in ignorance  
Ye err, your feet transgress, and the bolt falls !  
Ay, have I sung, and dreamed that they would hear ;  
And worshipped, and made offerings ; — it may be  
They heard, and did perceive, and were well pleased, —

A little music in their ears, perchance,  
A grain more savor to their nostrils, sweet  
Tho' scarce accounted of. But when for me  
The mists of Acheron have striven up,  
And horror was shed round me ; when my knees  
Relaxed, my tongue clave speechless, they forgot.  
And when my sharp cry cut the moveless night,  
And days and nights my wailings clamored up  
And beat about their golden homes, perchance  
They shut their ears. No happy music this,  
Eddying through their nectar cups and calm !  
Then I cried out against them, and died not ;  
And rose, and set me to my daily tasks.  
So all day long, with bare, uplift right arm,  
Drew out the strong thread from the carded wool,  
Or wrought strange figures, lotus-buds and serpents,  
In purple on the himation's saffron fold ;  
Nor uttered praise with the slim-wristed girls  
To any god, nor uttered any prayer,  
Nor poured out bowls of wine and smooth bright oil,  
Nor brake and gave small cakes of beaten meal  
And honey, as this time, or such a god  
Required ; nor offered apples summer-flushed,  
Scarlet pomegranates, poppy-bells, or doves.



All this with scorn, and waiting all day long,  
And night long with dim fear, afraid of sleep, —  
Seeing I took no hurt of all these things,  
And seeing mine eyes were drièd of their tears  
So that once more the light grew sweet for me,  
Once more grew fair the fields and valley streams,  
I thought with how small profit men take heed  
To worship with bowed heads, and suppliant hands,  
And sacrifice, the everlasting gods,  
Who take small thought of them to curse or bless,  
Girt with their purples of perpetual peace !  
Thus blindly deemed I of them ; — yet — and yet —  
Have late well learned their hate is swift as fire,  
Be one so wretched to encounter it ;  
Ay, have I seen a multitude of good deeds  
Fly up in the pan like husks, like husks blown dry.  
Hereafter let none question the high gods !  
I questioned ; but these watching eyes have seen  
Actæon, thewed and sinewed like a god,  
Godlike for sweet speech and great deeds, hurled down  
To hideous death, — scarce suffered space to breathe  
Ere the wild heart in his changed quivering side  
Burst with mad terror, and the stag's wide eyes  
Stared one sick moment 'mid the dogs' hot jaws.

. . . . .

Cithæron, mother mount, set steadfastly  
Deep in Bæotia, past the utmost roar  
Of seas, beyond Corinthian waves withdrawn,  
Girt with green vales awake with brooks or still,  
Towers up mid lesser-browed Bæotian hills —  
These couched like herds secure beneath its ken —  
And watches earth's green corners. At mid-noon  
We of Plataæ mark the sun make pause  
Right over it, and top its crest with pride.  
Men of Eleusis look toward north at dawn  
To see the long white fleeces upward roll,  
Smitten aslant with saffron, fade like smoke,  
And leave the gray-green dripping glens all bare,  
The drenched slopes open sunward; slopes wherein  
What gods, what godlike men to match with gods,  
Have roamed, and grown up mighty, and waxed wise  
Under the law of him whom gods and men  
Reverence, and call Cheiron! He, made wise  
With knowledge of all wisdom, had made wise  
Actæon, till there moved none cunninger  
To drive with might the javelin forth, or bend  
The corded ebony, save Leto's son.

But him the Centaur shall behold no more  
With long stride making down the beechy glade,  
Clear-eyed, with firm lips laughing, — at his heels  
The clamor of his fifty deep-tongued hounds;  
Him the wise Centaur shall behold no more.

I have lived long, and watched out many days,  
And am well sick of watching. Three days since,  
I had gone out upon the slopes for herbs,  
Snake-root, and subtle gums; and when the light  
Fell slantwise through the upper glens, and missed  
The sunk ravines, I came where all the hills  
Circle the valley of Gargaphian streams.  
Reach beyond reach all down the valley gleamed, —  
Thick branches ringed them. Scarce a bowshot past  
My platan, thro' the woven leaves low-hung,  
Trembling in meshes of the woven sun,  
A yellow-sanded pool, shallow and clear,  
Lay sparkling, brown about the further bank  
From scarlet-berried ash-trees hanging over.  
But suddenly the shallows brake awake  
With laughter and light voices, and I saw  
Where Artemis, white goddess incorrupt,

Bane of swift beasts, and deadly for straight shaft  
Unswerving, from a coppice not far off  
Came to the pool from the hither bank to bathe.  
Amid her maiden company she moved,  
Their cross-thonged yellow buskins scattered off,  
Unloosed their knotted hair; and thus the pool  
Received them stepping, shrinking, down to it.

Here they flocked white, and splashed the water-drops  
On rounded breast and shoulder snowier  
Than the washed clouds athwart the morning's blue, —  
Fresher than river grasses which the herds  
Pluck from the river in the burning noons.  
Their tresses on the summer wind they flung;  
And some a shining yellow fleece let fall  
For the sun's envy; others with white hands  
Lifted a glooming wealth of locks more dark  
Than deepest wells, but purple in the sun.  
And She, their mistress, of the heart unstormed,  
Stood taller than they all, supreme, and still,  
Perfectly fair like day, and crowned with hair  
The color of nipt beech-leaves: Ay, such hair  
Was mine in years when I was such as these.

I let it fall to cover me, or coiled  
Its soft thick coils about my throat and arms ;  
Its color like nipt beech-leaves, tawny brown,  
But in the sun a fountain of live gold.

Even as thus they played, and some lithe maids  
Upreached white arms to grasp the berried ash,  
And, plucking the bright bunches, shed them wide  
By red ripe handfuls, not far off I saw  
With long stride making down the beechy glade,  
Clear-eyed, with firm lips laughing, at his heels  
The clamor of his fifty deep-tongued hounds,  
Actæon. I beheld him not far off,  
But unto bath and bathers hid from view,  
Being beyond that mighty rock whereon  
His wont was to lie stretched at dip of eve,  
When frogs are loud amid the tall-plumed sedge  
In marshy spots about Asopus' bank, —  
Deeming his life was very sweet, his day  
A pleasant one, the peopled breadths of earth  
Most fair, and fair the shining tracts of sea ;  
Green solitudes, and broad low-lying plains  
Made brown with frequent labors of men's hands,

And salt, blue, fruitless waters. But this mount,  
Cithæron, bosomed deep in soundless hills,  
Its fountained vales, its nights of starry calm,  
Its high chill dawns, its long-drawn golden days, —  
Was dearest to him. Here he dreamed high dreams,  
And felt within his sinews strength to strive  
Where strife was sorest and to overcome,  
And in his heart the thought to do great deeds,  
With power in all ways to accomplish them.  
For had not he done well to men, and done  
Well to the gods? Therefore he stood secure.

But him, — for him — Ah that these eyes should  
see! —  
Approached a sudden stumbling in his ways!  
Not yet, not yet he knew a god's fierce wrath,  
Nor wist of that swift vengeance lying in wait.

And now he came upon a slope of sward  
Against the pool. With startled cry the maids  
Shrank clamoring round their mistress, or made flight  
To covert in the hazel thickets. She

Stirred not ; but pitiless anger paled her eyes,  
Intent with deadly purpose. He, amazed,  
Stood with his head thrust forward, while his curls  
Sun-lit lay glorious on his mighty neck, —  
Let fall his bow and clanging spear, and gazed  
Dilate with ecstasy ; nor marked the dogs  
Hush their deep tongues, draw close, and ring him  
round,  
And fix upon him strange, red, hungry eyes,  
And crouch to spring. This for a moment. Then  
It seemed his strong knees faltered, and he sank.  
Then I cried out, — for straight a shuddering stag  
Sprang one wild leap over the dogs ; but they  
Fastened upon his flanks with a long yell,  
And reached his throat ; and that proud head went  
down  
Beneath their wet, red fangs and reeking jaws.

I have lived long, and watched out many days,  
Yet have not seen that ought is sweet save life,  
Nor learned that life hath other end than death.  
Thick horror like a cloud had veiled my sight,  
That for a space I saw not, and my ears

Were shut from hearing ; but when sense grew clear  
Once more, I only saw the vacant pool  
Unrippled, — only saw the dreadful sward,  
Where dogs lay gorged, or moved in fretful search,  
Questing uneasily ; and some far up  
The slope, and some at the low water's edge,  
With snouts set high in air and straining throats  
Uttered keen howls that smote the echoing hills.  
They missed their master's form, nor understood  
Where was the voice they loved, the hand that reared ; —  
And some lay watching by the spear and bow  
Flung down.

And now upon the homeless pack  
And paling stream arose a noiseless wind  
Out of the yellow west awhile, and stirred  
The branches down the valley ; then blew off  
To eastward toward the long gray straits, and died  
Into the dark, beyond the utmost verge.



*IN THE AFTERNOON.*

WIND of the summer afternoon,  
Hush, for my heart is out of tune !

Hush, for thou movest restlessly  
The too light sleeper, Memory !

Whate'er thou hast to tell me, yet  
'Twere something sweeter to forget, —

Sweeter than all thy breath of balm  
An hour of unremembering calm !

Blowing over the roofs, and down  
The bright streets of this inland town,

These busy crowds, these rocking trees —  
What strange note hast thou caught from these ?

A note of waves and rushing tides,  
Where past the dikes the red flood glides,

To brim the shining channels far  
Up the green plains of Tantramar.

Once more I snuff the salt, I stand  
On the long dikes of Westmoreland ;

I watch the narrowing flats, the strip  
Of red clay at the water's lip ;

Far off the net-reels, brown and high,  
And boat-masts slim against the sky ;

Along the ridges of the dikes  
Wind-beaten scant sea-grass, and spikes

Of last year's mullein ; down the slopes  
To landward, in the sun, thick ropes

Of blue vetch, and convolvulus,  
And matted roses glorious.

*In the Afternoon.*

The liberal blooms o'erbrim my hands ;  
I walk the level, wide marsh-lands ;

Waist-deep in dusty-blossomed grass  
I watch the swooping breezes pass

In sudden, long, pale lines, that flee  
Up the deep breast of this green sea.

I listen to the bird that stirs  
The purple tops, and grasshoppers

Whose summer din, before my feet  
Subsiding, wakes on my retreat.

Again the droning bees hum by ;  
Still-winged, the gray hawk wheels on high ;

I drink again the wild perfumes,  
And roll, and crush the grassy blooms.

Blown back to olden days, I fain  
Would quaff the olden joys again ;

But all the olden sweetness not  
The old unmindful peace hath brought.

Wind of this summer afternoon,  
Thou hast recalled my childhood's June;

My heart — still is it satisfied  
By all the golden summer-tide?

Hast thou one eager yearning filled,  
Or any restless throbbing stilled,

Or hast thou any power to bear  
Even a little of my care? —

Ever so little of this weight  
Of weariness canst thou abate?

Ah, poor thy gift indeed, unless  
Thou bring the old child-heartedness, —

And such a gift to bring is given,  
Alas, to no wind under heaven!

Wind of the summer afternoon,  
Be still ; my heart is not in tune.

Sweet is thy voice ; but yet, but yet —  
Of all 'twere sweetest to forget !

FREDERICTON, N. B.

*THE PIPES OF PAN.*

RINGED with the flocking of hills, within shepherding  
watch of Olympus,  
Tempe, vale of the gods, lies in green quiet with-  
drawn ;  
Tempe, vale of the gods, deep-couched amid woodland  
and woodland,  
Threaded with amber of brooks, mirrored in azure of  
pools,  
All day drowsed with the sun, charm-drunken with  
moonlight at midnight,  
Walled from the world forever under a vapor of  
dreams, —  
Hid by the shadows of dreams, not found by the curi-  
ous footstep,  
Sacred and secret forever, Tempe, vale of the gods.

How, through the cleft of its bosom, goes sweetly the  
water Penëus !

How by Penëus the sward breaks into saffron and  
blue !

How the long slope-floored beech-glades mount to the  
wind-wakened uplands,

Where, through flame-berried ash, troop the hoofed  
Centaurs at morn !

Nowhere greens a copse but the eye-beams of Artemis  
pierce it.

Breathes no laurel her balm but Phœbus' fingers  
caress.

Springs no bed of wild blossom but limbs of dryad  
have pressed it.

Sparkle the nymphs, and the brooks chime with shy  
laughter and calls.

Here is a nook. Two rivulets fall to mix with  
Penëus,

Loiter a space, and sleep, checked and choked by the  
reeds.

Long grass waves in the windless water, strown with  
the lote-leaf ;

Twist thro' dripping soil great alder roots, and the  
air

Glooms with the dripping tangle of leaf-thick branches,  
and stillness

Keeps in the strange-coiled stems, ferns, and wet-  
loving weeds.

Hither comes Pan, to this pregnant earthy spot, when  
his piping

Flags; and his pipes outworn breaking and casting  
away,

Fits new reeds to his mouth with the weird earth-  
melody in them,

Piercing, alive with a life able to mix with the god's.

Then, as he blows, and the searching sequence delights  
him, the goat-feet

Furtive withdraw; and a bird stirs and flutes in the  
gloom

Answering. Float with the stream the outworn pipes,  
with a whisper, —

“What the god breathes on, the god never can wholly  
evade!”

God-breath lurks in each fragment forever. Dispersed  
by Penëus



Wandering, caught in the ripples, wind-blown hither  
and there,  
Over the whole green earth and globe of sea they are  
scattered,  
Coming to secret spots, where in a visible form  
Comes not the god, though he come declared in his  
workings. And mortals  
Straying in cool of morn, or bodeful hasting at eve,  
Or in the depths of noonday plunged to shadiest  
coverts,  
Spy them, and set to their lips; blow, and fling them  
away!

Ay, they fling them away,— but never wholly! There-  
after  
Creeps strange fire in their veins, murmur strange  
tongues in their brain,  
Sweetly evasive; a secret madness takes them,— a  
charm-struck  
Passion for woods and wild life, the solitude of the  
hills.  
Therefore they fly the heedless throngs and traffic of  
cities,

*The Pipes of Pan.*

25

Haunt mossed caverns, and wells bubbling ice-cool;  
and their souls

Gather a magical gleam of the secret of life, and the  
god's voice

Calls to them, not from afar, teaching them wonderful  
things.

*BEFORE THE BREATH OF STORM.*

BEFORE the breath of storm,  
While yet the long, bright afternoons are warm,  
Under this stainless arch of azure sky  
The air is filled with gathering wings for flight;  
Yet with the shrill mirth and the loud delight  
Comes the foreboding sorrow of this cry —  
“Till the storm scatter and the gloom dispel,  
Farewell! Farewell!  
Farewell!”

Why will ye go so soon,  
In these soft hours, this sweeter month than June?  
The liquid air floats over field and tree  
A veil of dreams; — where do ye find the sting?  
A gold enchantment sleeps upon the sea  
And purple hills; — why have ye taken wing?  
But faint, far-heard, the answers fall and swell —  
“Farewell! Farewell!  
Farewell!”

*OUT OF POMPEII.*

SAVE what the night-wind woke of sweet  
And solemn sound, I heard alone  
The sleepless ocean's ceaseless beat,  
The surge's monotone.

Low down the south a dreary gleam  
Of white light smote the sullen swells,  
Evasive as a blissful dream,  
Or wind-borne notes of bells.

The water's lapping whispers stole  
Into my brain, and there effaced  
All human memories from my soul, —  
An atom in a shifting waste.

Weird fingers, groping, strove to raise  
Some numbing horror from my mind ;  
And ever, as it met my gaze,  
The sharp truth struck me blind.

*Out of Pompeii.*

The keen edged breath of the salt sea  
Stung; but a faint, swift, sulphurous smell  
Blew past, and I reeled dizzily  
As from the brink of hell,

One moment; then the swan-necked prow  
Sustained me, and once more I scanned  
The unfenced flood, against my brow  
Arching my lifted hand.

O'er all the unstable vague expanse  
I towered the lord supreme, and smiled;  
And marked the hard, white sparkles glance,  
The dark vault wide and wild.

Again that faint wind swept my face —  
With hideous menace swept my eyes.  
I cowered back in my straitened place  
And groped with dim surmise,

Not knowing yet. Not knowing why,  
I turned, as one asleep might turn,  
And noted with half curious eye  
The figure crouched astern.

On heaped-up leopard skins she crouched,  
Asleep, and soft skins covered her,  
And scarlet stuffs where she was couched,  
Sodden with sea-water,

Burned lurid with black stains, and smote  
My thought with waking pangs ; I saw  
The white arm drooping from the boat,  
Round-moulded, pure from flaw ;

The yellow sandals even-thonged ;  
The fair face, wan with haunting pain ; —  
Then sudden, crowding memories thronged  
Like unpent sudden rain.

Clear-stamped, as by white lightning when  
The swift flame rends the night, wide-eyed  
I saw dim streets, and fleeing men,  
And walls from side to side

Reeling, and great rocks fallen ; a pall  
Above us, an encumbering shroud  
About our feet, and over all  
The awful Form that bowed

Our hearts, the fiery scourge that smote  
The city, — the red Mount. Clear, clear  
I saw it, — and this lonely boat,  
And us two drifting here !

With one sharp cry I sprang and hid  
My face among the skins beside  
Her feet, and held her safe, and chid  
The tumult till it died.

And crouched thus at her rescued feet.  
Save her low breath, I heard alone  
The sleepless ocean's ceaseless beat,  
The surge's monotone.

*TO FREDERICTON IN MAY-TIME.*

THIS morning, full of breezes and perfume,  
Brimful of promise of midsummer weather,  
When bees and birds and I are glad together,  
Breathes of the full-leaved season, when soft gloom  
Chequers thy streets, and thy close elms assume  
Round roof and spire the semblance of green billows;  
Yet now thy glory is the yellow willows,  
The yellow willows, full of bees and bloom.

Under their dusty blossoms blackbirds meet,  
And robins pipe amid the cedars nigher;  
Thro' the still elms I hear the ferry's beat;  
The swallows chirp about the towering spire;  
The whole air pulses with its weight of sweet;  
Yet not quite satisfied is my desire!



*IN SEPTEMBER.*

THIS windy, bright September afternoon  
My heart is wide awake, yet full of dreams.  
The air, alive with hushed confusion, teems  
With scent of grain-fields, and a mystic rune,  
Foreboding of the fall of Summer soon,  
Keeps swelling and subsiding; till there seems  
O'er all the world of valleys, hills, and streams,  
Only the wind's inexplicable tune.

My heart is full of dreams, yet wide awake.  
I lie and watch the topmost tossing boughs  
Of tall elms, pale against the vaulted blue;  
But even now some yellowing branches shake,  
Some hue of death the living green endows: —  
If beauty flies, fain would I vanish too.

*CONCERNING CUTHBERT THE MONK.*

CUTHBERT, open! Let me in!  
Cease your praying for a minute!  
Here the darkness seems to grin,  
Holds a thousand horrors in it;  
Down the stony corridor  
Footsteps pace the stony floor.

Here they foot it, pacing slow,  
Monk-like, one behind another! —  
Don't you hear me? Don't you know  
I'm a little nervous, Brother?  
Won't you speak? Then, by your leave,  
Here's a guest for Christmas Eve!

Shrive me, but I got a fright !

Monks of centuries ago

Wander back to see to-night

How the old place looks. — Hello !

This the kind of watch you keep !

Come to pray — and go to sleep !

Ah, this mortal flesh is weak !

Who is saintly there's no saying.

Here are tears upon his cheek,

And he sleeps that should be praying ; —

Sleeps, and dreams, and murmurs. Nay,

I'll not wake you. — Sleep away !

Holy saints, the night is keen !

How the nipping wind does drive

Through yon tree-tops, bare and lean,

Till their shadow seems alive, —

Patters through the bars, and falls,

Shivering, on the floor and walls !

How yon patch of freezing sky

Echoes back their bell-rings !

Down in the gray city, nigh  
Severn, every steeple swings.  
All the busy streets are bright.  
Many folk are out to-night.

— What's that, Brother? Did you speak? —  
Christ save them that talk in sleep!  
Smile they howsoever meek,  
Somewhat in their hearts they keep.  
*We*, good souls, what shifts we make  
To keep talking whilst awake!

Christ be praised, that fetched me in  
Early, yet a youngling, while  
All unlearned in life and sin,  
Love and travail, grief and guile!  
For your world of two-score years,  
Cuthbert, all you have is tears.

Dreaming, still he hears the bells  
As he heard them years ago,  
Ere he sought our quiet cells  
Iron-mouthed and wrenched with woe,

*Concerning Cuthbert the Monk.*

Out of what dread storms who knows —  
Faithfulest of friends and foes !

Faithful was he, aye, I ween,  
Pitiful, and kind, and wise ;  
But in mindful moods I've seen  
Flame enough in those sunk eyes !  
Praised be Christ, whose timely Hand  
Plucked from out the fire this brand !

Now in dreams he's many miles  
Hence, he's back in Ireland.  
Ah, how tenderly he smiles,  
Stretching a caressing hand !  
Backward now his memory glides  
To old happy Christmas-tides.

Now once more a loving wife  
Holds him ; now he sees his boys,  
Smiles at all their playful strife,  
All their childish mirth and noise ;  
Softly now she strokes his hair.—  
Ah, their world is very fair !

— Waking, all your loss shall be  
Unforgotten evermore !  
Sleep alone holds these for thee.  
Sleep then, Brother ! — To restore  
All your heaven that has died  
Heaven and Hell may be too wide !

Sleep, and dream, and be awhile  
Happy, Cuthbert, once again !  
Soon you'll wake, and cease to smile,  
And your heart will sink with pain.  
You will hear the merry town, —  
And a weight will press you down.

Hungry-hearted, you will see  
Only the thin shadows fall  
From yon bleak-topped poplar-tree, —  
Icy fingers on the wall.  
You will watch them come and go,  
Telling o'er your count of woe.

— Nay, now, hear me, how I prate !  
I, a foolish monk, and old,

*Concerning Cuthbert the Monk.*

Maundering o'er a life and fate  
To me unknown, by you untold !  
Yet I know you're like to weep  
Soon, so, Brother, this night sleep.

*IMPULSE.*

A HOLLOW on the verge of May,  
Thick strewn with drift of leaves. Beneath  
The densest drift a thrusting sheath  
Of sharp green striving toward the day!  
I mused — "So dull Obstruction sets  
A bar to even violets,  
When these would go their nobler way!"

My feet again, some days gone by,  
The self-same spot sought idly. There,  
Obstruction foiled, the adoring air  
Caressed a blossom woven of sky  
And dew, whose misty petals blue,  
With bliss of being thrilled athrough,  
Dilated like a timorous eye.

Reck well this rede, my soul! The good  
The blossom craved was near, tho' hid.  
Fret not that thou must doubt, but rid



*Impulse.*

Thy sky-path of obstructions strewed  
By winds of folly. Then, do thou  
The Godward impulse room allow  
To reach its perfect air and food !

*THE ISLES—AN ODE.*

I.

FAITHFUL reports of them have reached me oft !  
Many their embassy to mortal court,  
By golden pomp, and breathless-heard consort  
Of music soft, —  
By fragrances accredited, and dreams.  
Many their speeding herald, whose light feet  
Make pause at wayside brooks, and fords of streams,  
Leaving transfigured by an effluence fleet  
Those wayfarers they meet.

II.

No wind from out the solemn wells of night  
But hath its burden of strange messages,  
Tormenting for interpreter ; nor less  
The wizard light

That steals from noon-stilled waters, woven in shade,  
Beckons somewhither, with cool fingers slim.  
No dawn but hath some subtle word conveyed  
In rose ineffable at sunrise rim,  
Or charactery dim.

## III.

One moment throbs the hearing, yearns the sight.  
But tho' not far, yet strangely hid — the way,  
And our sense slow ; nor long for us delay  
The guides their flight !  
The breath goes by ; the word, the light, elude ;  
And we stay wondering. But there comes an hour  
Of fitness perfect and unfettered mood,  
When splits her husk the finer sense with power,  
And — yon their palm-trees tower !

## IV.

Here Homer came, and Milton came, tho' blind.  
Omar's deep doubts still found them nigh and nigher,  
And learned them fashioned to the heart's desire.  
The supreme mind

Of Shakspeare took their sovereignty, and smiled.  
Those passionate Israelitish lips that poured  
The Song of Songs attained them ; and the wild  
Child-heart of Shelley, here from strife restored,  
Remembers not life's sword.

*A SERENADE.*

Love hath given the day for longing,  
And for joy the night.  
Dearest, to thy distant chamber  
Wings my soul its flight.

Though unfathomed seas divide us,  
And the lingering year,  
'Tis the hour when absence parts not, —  
Memory hath no tear.

O'er the charmed and silent river  
Drifts my lonely boat ;  
From the haunted shores and islands  
Tender murmurs float,

Tender breaths of glade and forest,  
Breezes of perfume ; —  
Surely, surely thou canst hear me  
In thy quiet room !

Unto shore, and sky, and silence,  
    Low I pour my song.  
All the spell, the summer sweetness, —  
    These to thee belong.

Thou art love, the trance and rapture  
    Of the midnight clear!  
Sweet, tho' world on world withhold thee,  
    I can clasp thee here.

*OFF PELORUS.*

CRIMSON swims the sunset over far Pelorus ;  
    Burning crimson tops its frowning crest of pine.  
Purple sleeps the shore and floats the wave before us,  
    Eachwhere from the oar-stroke eddying warm like  
        wine.

Soundless foams the creamy violet wake behind us ;  
    We but *see* the creaking of the labored oar ;  
We have stopped our ears, — mad were we not to blind  
    us,  
    Lest our eyes behold our Ithaca no more.

See the purple splendor o'er the island streaming,  
    O'er the prostrate sails and equal-sided ship !  
Windless hangs the vine, and warm the sands lie  
    gleaming ;  
    Droop the great grape-clusters melting for the lip.

Sweet the golden calm, the glowing light elysian.

Sweet were red-mouthed plenty mindless grown of  
pain.

Sweeter yet behold — a sore-bewildering vision !

Idly took we thought, and stopped our ears in vain.

Idly took we thought, for still our eyes betray us.

Lo, the white-limbed maids, with love-soft eyes aglow,  
Gleaming bosoms bare, loosed hair, sweet hands to  
slay us,

Warm lips wild with song, and softer throats than  
snow !

See the King ! he hearkens, — hears their song, —  
strains forward, —

As some mountain snake attends the shepherd's  
reed.

Now with urgent hand he bids us turn us shoreward, —

Bend the groaning oar now ; give the King no heed !

Mark the luring music by his eyes' wild yearning,

Eager lips, and mighty straining at the cords !

Well we guess the song, the subtle words and burning,

Sung to him, the subtle king of burning words.



"Much-enduring Wanderer, wondrous-tongued, come  
nigher!

Sage of princes, bane of Ilion's lofty walls!  
Whatsoe'er in all the populous earth befalls  
We will teach thee, to thine uttermost desire."

So, we rise up twain, and make his bonds securer.

Seethes the startled sea now from the surging blade.  
Leaps the dark ship forth, as we, with hearts grown  
surer,

Eyes averse, and war-worn faces made afraid,

O'er the waste warm reaches drive our prow, sea-  
cleaving,

Past the luring death, into the folding night.

Home shall hold us yet, and cease our wives from  
grieving, —

Safe from storm, and toil, and flame, and clanging  
fight.

*A BALLADE OF CALYPSO.*

THE loud black flight of the storm diverges  
Over a spot in the loud-mouthed main,  
Where, crowned with summer and sun, emerges  
An isle unbeaten of wind or rain.  
And here, of its sweet queen grown full fain, —  
By whose kisses the whole broad earth seems poor, —  
Tarries the wave-worn prince, Troy's bane,  
In the green Ogygian Isle secure.

To her voice our sweetest songs are dirges.  
She gives him all things, counting it gain.  
Ringed with the rocks and ancient surges,  
How could Fate dissever these twain?  
But him no loves nor delights retain;  
New knowledge, new lands, new loves allure;  
Forgotten the perils, and toils, and pain,  
In the green Ogygian Isle secure.

So he spurns her kisses and gifts, and urges  
His weak skiff over the wind-vest plain,  
Till the gray of the sky in the gray sea merges,  
And nights reel round, and waver, and wane.  
He sits once more in his own domain.  
No more the remote sea-walls immure. —  
But ah, for the love he shall clasp not again  
In the green Ogygian Isle secure !

## L'ENVOI.

Princes, and ye whose delights remain,  
To the one good gift of the gods hold sure,  
Lest ye too mourn, in vain, in vain,  
Your green Ogygian Isle secure !

*RAIN.*

SHARP drives the rain, sharp drives the endless rain.

The rain-winds wake and wander, lift and blow.

The slow smoke-wreaths of vapor to and fro

Wave, and unweave, and gather and build again.

Over the far gray reaches of the plain —

Gray miles on miles my passionate thought must  
go, —

I strain my sight, grown dim with gazing so,

Pressing my face against the streaming pane.

How the rain beats! Ah God, if love had power

To voice its utmost yearning, even tho'

Thro' time and bitter distance, not in vain,

Surely Her heart would hear me at this hour,

Look thro' the years, and see! But would She know

The white face pressed against the streaming pane?

*MIST.*

Its hand compassionate guards our restless sight  
Against how many a harshness, many an ill !  
Tender as sleep, its shadowy palms distil  
Weird vapors that ensnare our eyes with light.  
Rash eyes, kept ignorant in their own despite,  
It lets not see the unsightliness they will,  
But paints each scanty fairness fairer still,  
And still deludes us to our own delight.

It fades, regathers, never quite dissolves.  
And ah that life, ah that the heart and brain  
Might keep their mist and glamour, not to know  
So soon the disenchantment and the pain !  
But one by one our dear illusions go,  
Stript and cast forth as time's slow wheel revolves.

*THE TANTRAMAR REVISITED.*

SUMMERS and summers have come, and gone with the  
flight of the swallow;  
Sunshine and thunder have been, storm, and winter,  
and frost;  
Many and many a sorrow has all but died from re-  
membrance,  
Many a dream of joy fall'n in the shadow of pain.  
Hands of chance and change have marred, or moulded,  
or broken,  
Busy with spirit or flesh, all I most have adored;  
Even the bosom of Earth is strewn with heavier shad-  
ows, —  
Only in these green hills, aslant to the sea, no  
change!  
Here where the road that has climbed from the inland  
valleys and woodlands,

Dips from the hill-tops down, straight to the base of  
the hills, —

Here, from my vantage-ground, I can see the scatter-  
ing houses,

Stained with time, set warm in orchards, and meadows,  
and wheat,

Dotting the broad bright slopes outspread to south-  
ward and eastward,

Wind-swept all day long, blown by the south-east  
wind.

Skirting the sunbright uplands stretches a riband of  
meadow,

Shorn of the laboring grass, bulwarked well from the  
sea,

Fenced on its seaward border with long clay dikes  
from the turbid

Surge and flow of the tides vexing the Westmoreland  
shores.

Yonder, toward the left, lie broad the Westmoreland  
marshes, —

Miles on miles they extend, level, and grassy, and  
dim,

Clear from the long red sweep of flats to the sky in  
the distance,

Save for the outlying heights, green-rampired Cumber-  
land Point ;

Miles on miles outrolled, and the river-channels divide  
them, —

Miles on miles of green, barred by the hurtling  
gusts.

Miles on miles beyond the tawny bay is Minudie.

There are the low blue hills ; villages gleam at their  
feet.

Nearer a white sail shines across the water, and  
nearer

Still are the slim, gray masts of fishing boats dry on  
the flats.

Ah, how well I remember those wide red flats, above  
tide-mark

Pale with scurf of the salt, seamed and baked in the  
sun !

Well I remember the piles of blocks and ropes, and  
the net-reels

Wound with the beaded nets, dripping and dark from  
the sea !

Now at this season the nets are unwound ; they hang  
from the rafters



Over the fresh-stowed hay in upland barns, and the  
wind  
Blows all day through the chinks, with the streaks of  
sunlight, and sways them  
Softly at will; or they lie heaped in the gloom of a  
loft.

Now at this season the reels are empty and idle; I see  
them  
Over the lines of the dikes, over the gossiping grass.  
Now at this season they swing in the long strong wind,  
thro' the lonesome  
Golden afternoon, shunned by the foraging gulls.  
Near about sunset the crane will journey homeward  
above them;  
Round them, under the moon, all the calm night  
long,  
Winnowing soft gray wings of marsh-owls wander and  
wander,  
Now to the broad, lit marsh, now to the dusk  
dike.  
Soon, thro' their dew-wet frames, in the live keen  
freshness of morning,  
Out of the teeth of the dawn blows back the awaken-  
ing wind.

Then, as the blue day mounts, and the low-shot shafts  
of the sunlight

Glance from the tide to the shore, gossamers jewelled  
with dew

Sparkle and wave, where late sea-spoiling fathoms of  
drift-net

Myriad-meshed, uploomed sombrely over the land.

Well I remember it all. The salt raw scent of the  
margin;

While, with men at the windlass, groaned each reel,  
and the net,

Surging in ponderous lengths, uprose and coiled in its  
station;

Then each man to his home, — well I remember it  
all!

Yet, as I sit and watch, this present peace of the land-  
scape, —

Stranded boats, these reels empty and idle, the hush,  
One gray hawk slow-wheeling above yon cluster of  
haystacks, —

More than the old-time stir this stillness welcomes me  
home.

Ah the old-time stir, how once it stung me with rapture, —

Old-time sweetness, the winds freighted with honey and salt!

Yet will I stay my steps and not go down to the marsh-land, —

Muse and recall far off, rather remember than see, —

Lest on too close sight I miss the darling illusion,

Spy at their task even here the hands of chance and change.

*THE SLAVE WOMAN.*

SHEDDING cool drops upon the sun-baked clay,  
The dripping jar, brimful, she rests a space  
On the well's dry white brink, and leans her face,  
Heavy with tears and many a heartsick day,  
Down to the water's lip, whence slips away  
A rivulet thro' the hot, bright square apace,  
And lo! her brow casts off each servile trace —  
The wave's cool breath hath won her thoughts astray.

Ah desolate heart! Thy fate thou hast forgot  
One moment; the dull pain hath left those eyes  
Whose yearning pierces time, and space, and tears.  
Thou seest what was once, but now is not,—  
By Niger thy bright home, thy Paradise,  
Unscathed of flame, and foe, and hostile spears.

*THE MARVELLOUS WORK.*

"Rise after rise bow the phantoms behind me." — *Whitman.*

NOT yet, for all their quest of it, have men  
Cast wholly by the ignoble dread of truth !  
Each of God's laws, if but so late discerned  
Their faiths upgrew unsuckled in it, fills  
Their hearts with angry fears, perchance lest God  
Be dwarfed behind his own decrees, or made  
Superfluous through his perfectness of deed !  
But large increase of knowledge in these days  
Is come about us, fraught with ill for them  
Whose creeds are cut too straight to hold new growth,  
Whose faiths are clamped against access of wisdom ;  
Fraught with some sadness, too, for those just souls  
Who, clothed in rigid teachings found too scant,  
Are fain to piece the dear accustomed garb,  
Till here a liberal, there a literal fragment,  
Here new, there old, here bright, there dark, disclose  
Their vestiture a strange discordant motley.

But O rare motley, — starred with thirst of truth,  
Patched with desire of wisdom; zoned about  
With passion for fresh knowledge, and the quest  
Of right! Such motley may be made at last,  
Through grave sincerity, a dawn-clear garment!

But, for the enfranchised spirit, this expanse  
Immeasurable of broad-horizoned view,—  
What rapt, considerate awe it summons forth,  
What adoration of the Eternal Cause!  
His days unmeasured ages, His designs  
Unfold through age-long silences, through surge  
Of world upheaval, coming to their aim  
As swerveless in fit time as tho' His finger  
But yesterday ordained, and wrought to-day.  
How the Eternal's unconcern of time,—  
Omnipotence that hath not dreamed of haste,—  
Is graven in granite-moulding æons' gloom;  
Is told in stony record of the roar  
Of long Silurian storms, and tempests huge  
Scourging the circuit of Devonian seas;  
Is whispered in the noiseless mists, the gray  
Soft drip of clouds about rank fern-forests,  
Through dateless terms that stored the layered coal;

Is uttered hoarse in strange Triassic forms  
Of monstrous life ; or stamped in ice-blue gleams  
Athwart the death-still years of glacial sleep !

Down the stupendous sequence, age on age,  
Thro' storm and peace, thro' shine and gloom, thro'  
warm

And pregnant periods of teeming birth,  
And seething realms of thunderous overthrow,—  
In the obscure and formless dawn of life,  
In gradual march from simple to complex,  
From lower to higher forms, and last to Man  
Through faint prophetic fashions,— stands declared  
The God of order and unchanging purpose.  
Creation, which He covers, Him contains,  
Even to the least up-groping atom. His  
The impulse and the quickening germ, whereby  
All things strive upward, reach toward greater good ;  
Till craving brute, informed with soul, grows Man,  
And Man turns homeward, yearning back to God.

*A SONG OF DEPENDENCE.*

LOVE, what were fame,  
And thou not in it,  
That I should hold it worth  
Much toil to win it?

What were success  
Didst thou not share it?  
As Spring can spare the snows  
I well could spare it!

Love, what were love  
But of thy giving  
That it should much prevail  
To sweeten living?



*A Song of Dependence.*

Nay, what were life,  
Save thou inspire it,  
That I should bid my soul  
Greatly desire it ?

*ON THE CREEK.*

DEAR Heart, the noisy strife  
And bitter carpings cease.  
Here is the lap of life,  
Here are the lips of peace.

Afar from stir of streets,  
The city's dust and din,  
What healing silence meets  
And greets us gliding in!

Our light birch silent floats;  
Soundless the paddle dips.  
Yon sunbeam thick with motes  
Athro' the leafage slips,

To light the iris wings  
Of dragon-flies alit  
On lily-leaves, and things  
Of gauze that float and flit.

*On the Creek.*

Above the water's brink  
Hush'd winds make summer riot ;  
Our thirsty spirits drink  
Deep, deep, the summer quiet.

We slip the world's gray husk,  
Emerge, and spread new plumes ;  
In sunbeam-fretted dusk,  
Thro' populous golden glooms,

Like thistledown we slide,  
Two disembodied dreams, —  
With spirits alert, wide-eyed,  
Explore the perfume-streams.

For scents of various grass  
Stream down the veering breeze ;  
Warm puffs of honey pass  
From flowering linden-trees ;

And fragrant gusts of gum,  
From clammy balm-tree buds,  
With fern-brake odors, come  
From intricate solitudes.

The elm-tops are astir  
With flirt of idle wings.  
Hark to the grackles' chirr  
Whene'er an elm-bough swings !

From off yon ash-limb sere  
Out-thrust amid green branches,  
Keen like an azure spear  
A kingfisher down launches.

Far up the creek his calls  
And lessening laugh retreat ;  
Again the silence falls,  
And soft the green hours fleet.

They fleet with drowsy hum  
Of insects on the wing ; —  
We sigh — the end must come !  
We taste our pleasure's sting.

No more, then, need we try  
The rapture to regain.  
We feel our day slip by,  
And cling to it in vain.

*On the Creek.*

But, Dear, keep thou in mind  
These moments swift and sweet !  
Their memory thou shalt find  
Illumine the common street ;

And thro' the dust and din,  
Smiling, thy heart shall hear  
Quiet waters lapsing thin,  
And locusts shrilling clear.

*LOTOS.*

WHEREFORE awake so long,  
Wide-eyed, laden with care?  
Not all battle is life,  
But a little respite and peace  
May fold us round as a fleece  
Soft-woven for all men's wear.  
Sleep, then, mindless of strife;  
Slumber, dreamless of wrong; —  
Hearken my slumber-song,  
Falling asleep.

Drowsily all noon long  
The warm winds rustle the grass  
Hush'dly, lulling thy brain, —  
Burthened with murmur of bees  
And numberless whispers, and ease.

Dream-clouds gather and pass  
Of painless remembrance of pain.  
Havened from rumor of wrong,  
Dreams are thy slumber-song,  
    Fallen asleep.

*THE SOWER.*

A BROWN sad-colored hillside, where the soil,  
Fresh from the frequent harrow, deep and fine,  
Lies bare ; no break in the remote sky-line,  
Save where a flock of pigeons streams aloft,  
Startled from feed in some low-lying croft,  
Or far-off spires with yellow of sunset shine ;  
And here the Sower, unwittingly divine,  
Exerts the silent forethought of his toil.

Alone he treads the glebe, his measured stride  
Dumb in the yielding soil ; and tho' small joy  
Dwell in his heavy face, as spreads the blind  
Pale grain from his dispensing palm aside,  
This plodding churl grows great in his employ ; —  
Godlike, he makes provision for mankind.

•



*THE POTATO HARVEST.*

A HIGH bare field, brown from the plough, and borne  
Aslant from sunset; amber wastes of sky  
Washing the ridge; a clamor of crows that fly  
In from the wide flats where the spent tides mourn  
To yon their rocking roosts in pines wind-torn;  
A line of gray snake-fence, that zigzags by  
A pond, and cattle; from the homestead nigh  
The long deep summonings of the supper horn.

Black on the ridge, against that lonely flush,  
A cart, and stoop-necked oxen; ranged beside,  
Some barrels; and the day-worn harvest folk,  
Here emptying their baskets, jar the hush  
With hollow thunders; down the dusk hillside  
Lumbers the wain; and day fades out like smoke.

*AFLOAT.*

AFLOAT! —

Ah Love, on the mirror of waters  
All the world seems with us afloat, —  
All the wide, bright world of the night;  
But the mad world of men is remote,  
And the prating of tongues is afar.  
We have fled from the crowd in our flight,  
And beyond the gray rim of the waters  
All the turmoil has sunk from our sight.  
Turn your head, Love, a little, and note  
Low down in the south a pale star.  
The mists of the horizon-line drench it,  
The beams of the moon all but quench it,  
Yet it shines thro' this flood-tide of light.  
Love, under that star is the world  
Of the day, of our life, and our sorrow,  
Where defamers and envious are.  
Here, here is our peace, our delight, —

To our closest love-converse no bar.  
Yet, as even in the moonbeam's despite  
Still is seen the pale beam of the star,  
So the light of our rapture this hour  
Cannot quench the remembrance of morrow.  
Though the wings of all winds are upfurl'd  
And a limitless silence hath power,  
Still the envious strife we forget not ;  
For the future is skilful to mar,  
And the past we have banished not quite.

But this hour — Ah Love, if it might  
With this splendor, this shining moon, set not !  
If only forever as now  
In this silence of silver adrift,  
In this reeling, slow, luminous sphere,  
This hollow great round of the night,  
We might drift with the tide-flow, and lift  
With the infinite pulse of the waters,  
See each but the other, and hear  
Our own language alone, I and thou,  
I here at the stern, at the prow  
The one woman, God's costliest gift !  
So only to see you, to hear you,

To speak with you, Love, to be near you, —  
I should reckon this life, well content.

But this dream is in vain, is in vain ;  
I will dream you one other. Suppose  
This one hour some nepenthe were lent,  
So pain, nor remembrance of pain,  
Nor remembrance nor knowledge of care,  
Nor distrust, nor fear, nor despair, —  
For these, and more also, God knows  
We have known and endured them, full share, —  
Should have power to approach us ! Suppose  
To us drifting and dreaming afloat  
On this shadowless shining of waters,  
This mirror of tide without stain,  
It were possible just for one hour  
To forebode, or remember, or fear,  
Nothing ; of one thing aware  
And one only, that we two are here,  
And together, unhindered : then, Dear,  
This one hour were our life, — all the past  
But the ignorant sleep before birth,  
All the future a trance, that should last  
Till we turn us again to our earth !

And this dream, hadst thou courage to hear  
Me interpret, were dreamed not in vain.  
For this hour, O Love, was not meant,  
With its rapture of peace, to endure,  
Intense, calm, passionate, pure, —  
My spirit with thy spirit blent  
As the odor of flower and flower,  
Of hyacinth blossom and rose.  
Heart, spirit, and body, and brain,  
Thou art utterly mine, as I thine ;  
But the love of the flesh, tho' at first  
When I saw you and loved you it burst  
With the love of the spirit one flame,  
Neither greater nor less, but the same,  
Is yet finite, attains not the height  
Of the spirit enfranchised, and must  
With the body slip back into dust.  
Our soul-passion is deathless, divine.

So, we strike now the perfectest note  
That man's heart is attuned to, attain  
The white light of the zenith supreme,  
Pierce the seventh and innermost sphere ;  
We are gods ! Let us cast us adrift

From the world of the flesh and its power !  
It is only a plunge, a quick roll  
Of our skiff — I will gather and fold  
You close, for the waters are cold, —  
A few sobs, and we rise one soul,  
Undis severed for ever and ever.

*RECKONING.*

WHAT matter that the sad gray city sleeps,  
Sodden with dull dreams, ill at ease, and snow  
Still falling chokes the swollen drains! I know  
That even with sun and summer not less creeps  
My spirit thro' gloom, nor ever gains the steeps  
Where Peace sits, inaccessible, yearned for so.  
Well have I learned that from my breast my woe  
Starts, — that as my own hand hath sown, it reaps.

I have had my measure of achievement, won  
Most I have striven for; and at last remains  
This one thing certain only, that who gains  
Success hath gained it at too sore a cost,  
If in his triumph hour his heart have lost  
Youth, and have found its sorrow of age begun.

*IN NOTRE DAME.*

WHEN first did I perceive you, when take heed  
Of what is now so deep in heart and brain  
That tears shall not efface it, nor the greed  
Of time or fate destroy, nor scorn, nor pain?

Long summers back I trembled to the vision  
Of your keen beauty, — a delirious sense  
That he you loved might hold in like derision  
Or Hell or Heaven, or sin or innocence.

This in my heart of hearts, while outwardly  
Nor speech nor guarded glance my dream betrayed;  
Till one day, so past thought you maddened me,  
My dream escaped my lips, glad and afraid.

Afraid, where no fear was. For lo, the gift  
(Worlds could not purchase it) was mine, was mine!  
And oh, my Sweet, how swift we went adrift  
On wild sweet waters, warmer-hued than wine!



My very eyes are dizzy with delight  
At your recalled caresses. Peace, my heart !  
She whom you beat so wild for lies to-night  
From you too many bitter leagues apart.

Be calm, and I will talk to you of her ;  
And you shall listen, passionately still ;  
And as the pauses in my verse recur,  
Think, heart, all this does fealty to your will !

All this, — a lithe and perfect-moulded form,  
Instinct with subtle gesture, soft, intense.  
Head small and queenlike, dainty feet that warm  
Even the dull world's ways into rapturous sense.

Clear, broad, white forehead, crowned low down with  
hair

Darker than night, more soft than sleep or tears.  
Nose neither small nor great, but straight, and fair.  
Like naught but smooth sea-shells her delicate ears.

But how to tell about her mouth and eyes !  
Her strange, sweet, maddening eyes, her subtle  
mouth !

Mouth in whose closure all love's sweetness lives, —  
Eyes with the warm gleam of the lustrous south !

Fathomless dusk by night, the day lets in  
Glimmer of emerald, — thus those eyes of hers !  
Above the firm sweep of the moulded chin  
The lips, than whose least kiss Heaven's gifts were  
worse.

Her bosom, — ah that now my head were laid  
Warm in that resting-place ! But, heart, be still !  
I will refrain, and break my dreams, afraid  
To stir the yearning I can not fulfil.

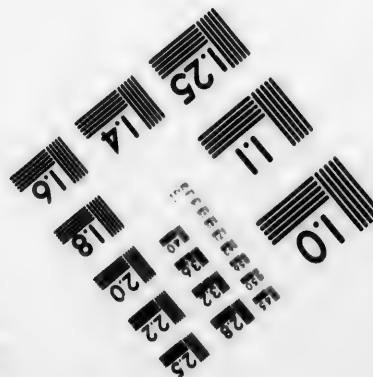
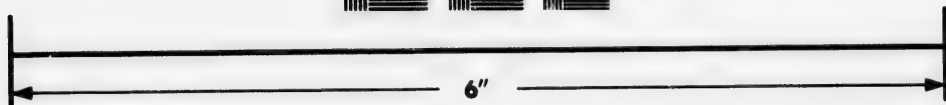
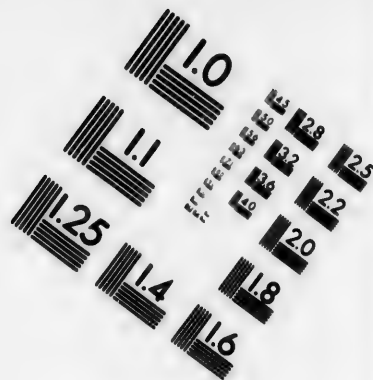
Love, in the northern night of Brittany  
Hear you no voice divide the night like flame ?  
In these gray walls the inmost soul of me  
Is swooning with the music of your name.

*NOCTURNE.*

SOOTHE, soothe  
The day-fall, soothe,  
Till wrinkling winds and seas are smooth, —  
Till yon low band  
Of charmed strand  
Puff seaward dreams from the inner land, —  
Till, lapped in mild half-lights, our dream-blown boat  
Is felt to float, to fall, to float.

A sundown rose  
Delays and glows  
O'er yon spired peak's remoter snows.  
Uprolling soon  
A red-ripe moon  
Lolls in the pines in drowsed half-swoon ;  
And thin moon-shades pace out to us, and shift  
Our visions as we drift, and drift.

From night-wide blooms  
In coppice glooms  
Set outward voyaging spice perfumes.  
The slow-pulsed seas,  
The shadowed trees, —  
The night-spell holds us one with these,  
Till, Love, we scarce know life from sleep, — we seem  
To smile a little, dream, and dream.



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10

*TIDES.*

THROUGH the still dusk how sighs the ebb-tide out,  
Reluctant for the reed-beds ! Down the sands  
It washes. Hark ! Beyond the wan gray strand's  
Low limits how the winding channels grieve,  
Aware the evasive waters soon will leave  
Them void amid the waste of desolate lands,  
Where shadowless to the sky the marsh expands,  
And the noon-heats must scar them, and the drought.

Yet soon for them the solacing tide returns  
To quench their thirst of longing. Ah, not so  
Works the stern law our tides of life obey !  
Ebbing in the night-watches swift away,  
Scarce known ere fled forever is the flow ;  
And in parched channel still the shrunk stream mourns.

**CONSOLATION.**

DEAR Heart, between us can be no farewell.

We have so long to live, so much to endure,  
What ills despair might work us who can tell,  
Had we not help in that one trust secure !

Time cannot sever, nor space keep long apart,  
Those whom Love's sleepless yearning would draw  
near.

Fate bends unto the indomitable heart  
And firm-fixt will. — What room have we for fear !



*DARK.*

Now, for the night is hushed and blind with rain,  
My soul desires communion, Dear, with thee.  
But hour by hour my spirit gets not free, —  
Hour by still hour my longing strives in vain.  
The thick dark hems me, ev'n to the restless brain.  
The wind's confusion vague encumbers me.  
Ev'n passionate memory, grown too faint to see  
Thy features, stirs not in her straitening chain.

And thou, dost thou too feel this strange divorce  
Of will from power? The spell of night and wind,  
Baffling desire and dream, dost thou too find?  
Not distance parts us, Dear; but this dim force,  
Intangible, holds us helpless, hushed with pain,  
Dumb with the dark, blind with the gusts of rain!

*THE FOOTPATH.*

PATH by which her feet have gone,  
Still you climb the windy hill,  
Still the hillside fronts the dawn,  
Fronts the clustering village still.

On the bare hill-summit waves  
Still the lonely poplar-tree.  
Where the blue lake-water raves,  
Still the plover pipe and flee.

Still you climb from windy pier,  
Where the white gull drops and screams,  
Through the village grown so dear,  
Till you reach my heaven of dreams.

Ah, the place we used to meet,  
I and she, — where sharp you turn,  
Shun the curious village street,  
Lurk thro' hollows, hide in fern!

*The Footpath.*

Then, the old house, ample-eaved,  
Night-long quiet beneath the stars, —  
How the maples, many-leaved,  
Screened us at the orchard bars!

Path by which her feet have gone,  
Still you climb the windy hill;  
Still the hillside fronts the dawn,  
Fronts the clustering village still;

But no longer she, my own,  
Treads you, save as dreams allow.  
And these eyes in dreams alone  
Dare to look upon you now.

*TOUT OU RIEN.*

LOVE, if you love me. love with heart and soul !  
I am not liberal as some lovers are,  
Accepting small return, and scanty dole,  
Gratefully glad to worship from afar.

Ah, love me passionately, or not at all !  
For love that counts the cost I have small need.  
My fingers would with laughing scorn let fall  
That poor half-love so many lovers heed.

Then be mine wholly, — body, soul, and brain !  
Your memory shall outlive kings. For Time  
Forgets his cunning and assails in vain  
Her whose name rings along the poet's rhyme.

*SALT.*

O BREATH of wind and sea,  
Bitter and clear,  
Now my faint soul springs free,  
Blown clean from fear !

O hard sweet strife, O sting  
Of buffeting salt !  
Doubt and despair take wing,  
Failure, and fault.

I dread not wrath or wrong, —  
Smile, and am free ;  
Strong while the winds are strong,  
The rocks, the sea.

*Salt.*

91

Heart of my heart, tho' life  
Front us with storm,  
Love will outlast the strife,  
More pure, more warm.

*KHARTOUM.*

SET in the fierce red desert for a sword,  
    Drawn and deep-driven implacably! The tide  
    Of scorching sand that chafes thy landward side  
Storming thy palms; and past thy front outpoured  
The Nile's vast dread and wonder! Late there roared  
    (While far off paused the long war, long defied)  
    Mad tumult thro' thy streets; and Gordon died,  
Slaughtered amid the yelling rebel horde!

Yet, spite of shame and wrathful tears, Khartoum,  
    We owe thee certain thanks, for thou hast shown  
    How still the one a thousand crowds outweighs, —  
Still one man's mood sways millions, — one man's doom  
    Smites nations; — and our burning spirits own  
    Not sordid these nor unheroic days!

*LIBERTY.*

*[From the French of Louis Honore Fréchet.]*

A CHILD, I set the thirsting of my mouth  
To the gold chalices of loves that craze.  
Surely, alas, I have found therein but drouth,  
Surely has sorrow darkened o'er my days.  
While worldlings chase each other madly round  
Their giddy track of frivolous gayety,  
Dreamer, my dream earth's utmost longings bound :  
One love alone is mine, my love is Liberty.

I have sung them all ; — youth's lightsomeness that  
fleets,  
Pure friendship, my most fondly cherished dreams,  
Wild blossoms and the winds that steal their sweets,  
Wood odors, and the star that whitely gleams.  
But our hearts change ; the spirit dulls its edge  
In the chill contact with reality ;  
These vanished like the foam-bells on the sedge :  
I sing one burden now, my song is Liberty.



I drench my spirit in ecstasy, consoled,  
And my gaze trembles toward the azure arc,  
When in the wide world-records I behold  
Flame like a meteor God's finger thro' the dark  
But if, at times, bowed over the abyss  
Wherein man crawls toward immortality, —  
Beholding here how sore his suffering is,  
I make my prayer with tears, it is for Liberty.

**TO THE MEMORY OF SIDNEY LANIER.**

SULLENLY falls the rain,  
Still hangs the dripping leaf,  
And ah, the pain! —  
The slow, dull ache of my grief,  
That throbs — “In vain, in vain, —  
You have garnered your sheaf!”

You have garnered your sheaf, with the tares  
Therein, and unripe wheat, —  
All that Death spares,  
Who has come with too swift feet,  
Not turning for any prayers  
Nor all who entreat.

They entreated with tears. But I —  
Ah me, all I can say  
Is only a cry!  
I had loved you many a day,  
Yet never had fate drawn nigh  
My way to your way.

*To the Memory of Sidney Lanier.*

My spirit made swift with love  
Went forth to you in your place  
Far off and above.

Tho' we met not face to face,  
My Elder Brother, yet love  
Had pierced through space !

*ON READING THE POEMS OF SIDNEY LANIER.*

POET and Flute-player, that flute of thine  
To me must ever seem thy perfect sign!  
    Tho' strenuously with breath divine inspired,  
To thy strait law is due thy deathless line.

*TO BLISS CARMAN,**WITH A COPY OF LANG'S "HELEN OF TROY."*

THIS antique song, new sung in fashion new,  
From me, half silent fallen, with love to you,  
O singer of unvexed scenes and virgin themes  
In strait, quaint, ancient metres, thronged with dreams !

*A BALLADE OF PHILOMELA.*

FROM gab of jay and chatter of crake  
The dusk wood covered me utterly.  
And here the tongue of the thrush was awake.  
Flame-floods out of the low bright sky  
Lighted the gloom with gold-brown dye,  
Before dark ; and a manifold chorussing  
Arose of thrushes remote and nigh, —  
For the tongue of the singer needs must sing.

Midmost a close green covert of brake  
A brown bird listening silently  
Sat ; and I thought — “ She grieves for the sake  
Of Itylus, — for the stains that lie  
In her heritage of sad memory.”  
But the thrushes were hushed at evening.  
Then I waited to hear the brown bird try, —  
For the tongue of the singer needs must sing.

And I said — “ The thought of the thrushes will shake  
With rapture remembered her heart ; and her shy  
Tongue of the dear times dead will take  
To make her a living song, when sigh  
The soft night winds disburthened by.  
Hark now ! ” — for the upraised quivering wing,  
The throat exultant, I could descry, —  
And the tongue of the singer needs must sing !

## L'ENVOI.

But the bird dropped dead with only a cry.  
I found its tongue was withered, poor thing !  
Then I no whit wondered, for well knew I  
That the heart of the singer will break or sing.

*A HERALD.*

ERE the Spring comes near  
O'er the smoking hills,  
Stirring a million rills  
To laughter low and clear  
Till winds are hushed to hear, —

Ere the eaves at noon  
Thaw and drip, there flies  
A herald thro' the skies  
With promise of a boon —  
Of birds and blossoms soon.

Subtle though it be,  
Yet sweetly sure that word ;  
E'en such my heart hath heard  
(Over life's frosty lea)  
Of Immortality.



*WINTER GERANIUMS.*

O WHAT avails the storm,  
When o'er my sense this Magian flower enweaves  
His charm of slumbrous summer, green and warm,  
And laps me in his luxury of leaves!

O where the frost that chills,  
Whilst these rich blooms burn red about my face,  
Luring me out across the irised hills  
Where Autumn broods o'er purple deeps of space!

*A BREATHING TIME.*

HERE is a breathing time, and rest for a little season.  
Here have I drained deep draughts out of the springs  
of life.

Here, as of old, while still unacquainted with toil and  
faintness,

Stretched are my veins with strength, fearless my heart  
and at peace.

I have come back from the crowd, the blinding strife  
and the tumult,

Pain, and the shadow of pain, sorrow in silence en-  
dured ;

Fighting, at last I have fallen, and sought the breast of  
the Mother, —

Quite cast down I have crept close to the broad sweet  
earth.

I.o, out of failure triumph! Renewed the wavering  
courage,

Tense the unstrung nerves, steadfast the faltering  
knees!

Weary no more, nor faint, nor grieved at heart, nor  
despairing,

Hushed in the earth's green lap, lulled to slumber and  
dreams!

*BIRCH AND PADDLE.*

TO BLISS CARMAN.

FRIEND, those delights of ours  
Under the sun and showers, —

Athrough the noonday blue  
Sliding our light canoe,

Or floating, hushed, at eve,  
When the dim pine-tops grieve !

What tonic days were they  
Where shy streams dart and play, —

Where rivers brown and strong  
As caribou bound along,

Break into angry parle  
Where wildcat rapids snarl,

*Birch and Paddle.*

Subside, and like a snake  
Wind to the quiet lake !

We've paddled furtively,  
Where giant boughs hide the sky, —

Have stolen, and held our breath,  
Thro' coverts still as death, —

Have left with wing unstirred  
The brooding phœbe-bird,

And hardly caused a care  
In the water-spider's lair.

For love of his clear pipe  
We've flushed the zigzag snipe, —

Have chased in wilful mood  
The wood-duck's flapping brood, —

Have spied the antlered moose  
Cropping the young green spruce,

*Birch and Paddle.*

107

And watched him till betrayed  
By the kingfisher's sharp tirade.

Quitting the bodeful shades  
We've run thro' sunnier glades,

And dropping craft and heed  
Have bid our paddles speed.

Where the mad rapids chafe  
We've shouted, steering safe, —

With sinew tense, nerve keen,  
Shot thro' the roar, and seen,

With spirit wild as theirs,  
The white waves leap like hares.

And then, with souls grown clear  
In that sweet atmosphere,

With influences serene  
Our blood and brain washed clean,

*Birch and Paddle.*

We've idled down the breast  
Of broadening tides at rest,

And marked the winds, the birds,  
The bees, the far-off herds,

Into a drowsy tune  
Transmute the afternoon.

So, Friend, with ears and eyes  
Which shy divinities

Have opened with their kiss,  
We need no balm but this,—

A little space for dreams  
On care-unsullied streams,—

'Mid task and toil, a space  
To dream on Nature's face!

*AN ODE FOR THE CANADIAN CON-  
FEDERACY.*

AWAKE, my country, the hour is great with change!  
Under this gloom which yet obscures the land,  
From ice-blue strait and stern Laurentian range  
To where giant peaks our western bounds command,  
A deep voice stirs, vibrating in men's ears  
As if their own hearts throbbed that thunder forth,  
A sound wherein who hearkens wisely hears  
The voice of the desire of this strong North,—  
This North whose heart of fire  
Yet knows not its desire  
Clearly, but dreams, and murmurs in the dream.  
The hour of dreams is done. Lo, on the hills the gleam!

Awake, my country, the hour of dreams is done!  
Doubt not, nor dread the greatness of thy fate.  
Tho' faint souls fear the keen confronting sun,  
And fain would bid the morn of splendor wait;



110 *An Ode for the Canadian Confederacy.*

Tho' dreamers, rapt in starry visions, cry  
    "Lo, yon thy future, yon thy faith, thy fame!"  
And stretch vain hands to stars, thy fame is nigh,  
    Here in Canadian hearth, and home, and name; —  
        This name which yet shall grow  
        Till all the nations know  
    Us for a patriot people, heart and hand  
Loyal to our native earth, our own Canadian land!

O strong hearts, guarding the birthright of our glory,  
    Worth your best blood this heritage that ye guard!  
These mighty streams resplendent with our story,  
    These iron coasts by rage of seas unjarred, —  
What fields of peace these bulwarks well secure!  
    What vales of plenty those calm floods supply!  
Shall not our love this rough, sweet land make sure,  
    Her bounds preserve inviolate, though we die?  
        O strong hearts of the North,  
        Let flame your loyalty forth,  
    And put the craven and base to an open shame,  
Till earth shall know the Child of Nations by her  
    name!

*THE QUELLING OF THE MOOSE.*

A MELICETE LEGEND.

WHEN tent was pitched, and supper done,  
And forgotten were paddle, and rod, and gun,  
And the low, bright planets, one by one,

Lit in the pine-tops their lamps of gold,  
To us by the fire, in our blankets rolled,  
This was the story Sacòbi told : —

“In those days came the moose from the east,  
A monster out of the white north-east,  
And as leaves before him were man and beast.

“The dark rock-hills of Saguenay  
Are strong, — they were but straw in his way.  
He leapt the St. Lawrence as in play.

" His breath was a storm and a flame ; his feet  
In the mountains thundered, fierce and fleet,  
Till men's hearts were as milk, and ceased to beat.

" But in those days dwelt Clote Scarp with men. .  
It is long to wait till he comes again, —  
But a Friend was near and could hear us, then !

" In his wigwam, built by the Oolastook,  
Where the ash-trees over the water look, .  
A voice of trouble the stillness shook.

" He rose, and took his bow from the wall,  
And listened ; he heard his people's call  
Pierce up from the villages one and all.

" From village to village he passed with cheer,  
And the people followed ; but when drew near  
The stride of the moose, they fled in fear.

" Like smoke in a wind they fled at the last.  
But he in a pass of the hills stood fast,  
And down at his feet his bow he cast.

"That terrible forehead, maned with flame,  
He smote with his open hand, — and tame  
As a dog the raging beast became.

"He smote with his open hand ; and lo !  
As shrinks in the rains of spring the snow,  
So shrank the monster beneath that blow,

"Till scarce the bulk of a bull he stood.  
And Clote Scarp led him down to the wood,  
And gave him the tender shoots for food."

He ceased ; and a voice said, "Understand  
How huge a peril will shrink like sand,  
When stayed by a prompt and steady hand !"

*A SONG OF REGRET.*

IN the southward sky  
The late swallows fly,  
The low red willows  
In the river quiver ;  
From the beeches nigh  
Russet leaves sail by,  
The tawny billows  
In the chill wind shiver ;  
The beech-burrs burst,  
And the nuts down-patter ;  
The red squirrels chatter  
O'er the wealth disperst.

Yon carmine glare  
Would the west outdare ; —  
'Tis the Fall attire  
Of the maples flaming.  
In the keen late air

*A Song of Regret.*

115

Is an impulse rare,  
A sting like fire,  
A desire past naming.  
But the crisp mists rise  
And my heart falls a-sighing, —  
Sighing, sighing  
That the sweet time dies!

*THE DEPARTING OF CLOTE SCARP.*

It is so long ago ; and men well nigh  
Forget what gladness was, and how the earth  
Gave corn in plenty, and the rivers fish,  
And the woods meat, before he went away.  
His going was on this wise.

All the works  
And words and ways of men and beasts became  
Evil, and all their thoughts continually  
Were but of evil. Then he made a feast.  
Upon the shore that is beside the sea  
That takes the setting sun, he ordered it,  
And called the beasts thereto. Only the men  
He called not, seeing them evil utterly.  
He fed the panther's crafty brood, and filled  
The lean wolf's hunger ; from the hollow tree

His honey stayed the bear's terrific jaws ;  
And the brown rabbit couched at peace, within  
The circling shadow of the eagle's wings.  
And when the feast was done he told them all  
That now, because their ways were evil grown,  
On that same day he must depart from them,  
And they should look upon his face no more.  
Then all the beasts were very sorrowful.

It was near sunset, and the wind was still,  
And down the yellow shore a thin wave washed  
Slowly ; and Clote Scarp launched his birch canoe,  
And spread his yellow sail, and moved from shore,  
Though no wind followed, streaming in the sail,  
Or roughening the clear waters after him.  
And all the beasts stood by the shore, and watched.  
Then to the west appeared a long red trail  
Over the wave ; and Clote Scarp sailed and sang  
Till the canoe grew little like a bird,  
And black, and vanished in the shining trail.  
And when the beasts could see his form no more,  
They still could hear him, singing as he sailed,  
And still they listened, hanging down their heads  
In long row, where the thin wave washed and fled.



*The Departing of Clote Scarp.*

But when the sound of singing died, and when  
They lifted up their voices in their grief,  
Lo! on the mouth of every beast a strange  
New tongue! Then rose they all and fled apart,  
Nor met again in council from that day.

*A BREAK.*

OH, the scent of the hyacinth blossom !  
The joy of that night,  
But the grievous awaking !  
The speed of my flight  
Thro' the dawn redly breaking !  
Gray lay the still sea ;  
Naked hillside and lea ;  
And gray with night frost  
The wide garden I crossed !  
But the hyacinth beds were a-bloom.  
I stooped and plucked one —  
In an instant 'twas done, —  
And I heard, not far off, a gun boom !  
In my bosom  
I thrust the crushed blossom ;  
And turned, and looked back

*A Break.*

Where She stood at her pane  
Waving sadly farewell once again;  
Then down the dim track  
Fled amain,  
With the flower in my bosom.  
Oh, the scent of the hyacinth blossom!

*TO A LADY,*

*AFTER HEARING HER READ KEATS' "NIGHTINGALE."*

THIS supreme song of him who dreamed  
All beauty, and whose heart foreknew  
The anguish of vain longing, seemed  
To breathe new mystery, breathed by you.

As if the rapture of the night,  
Moon-tranced, and passion-still, were stirred  
To some undreamed divine delight  
By sudden singing of a bird!

*RONDEAU.*

TO LOUIS HONORE FRÉCHETTE.

LAURELS for song ! And nobler bays,  
In old Olympian golden days  
Of clamor thro' the clear-eyed morn,  
No bowed triumphant head hath borne,  
Victorious in all Hellas' gaze !

They watched his glowing axles graze  
The goal, and rent the heavens with praise ; —  
Yet the supreamer heads have worn  
Laurels for song.

So thee, from no palaestra-plays  
A conqueror, to the gods we raise,  
Whose brows of all our singers born  
The sacred fillets chief adorn, —  
Who first of all our choir displays  
Laurels for song.

*A BIRTHDAY BALLADE.*

ALL deserted to wind and to sun  
You have left the dear, dusky canoe.  
The amber cool currents still run,  
But our paddle forgets to pursue.  
Our river wears still the rare blue,  
But its sparkle seems somehow less gay ;  
It confides me this greeting for you —  
Many Happy Returns of the Day !

Where's the mirth that with morn was begun,  
Nor dreaded the dark and the dew ?  
Some sweet thieves have made off with our fun !  
Would our paddles were free to pursue !  
Ah, could we but catch them anew,  
Clip their wings, forbid them to stray,  
Then more blithely we'd sing than we do —  
Many Happy Returns of the Day !

*A Birthday Ballade.*

Dear remembrances die, one by one,  
So cunning Time's craft to undo !  
But ours must be never undone.  
Oft again must the paddle pursue,  
Oft the treasured impression renew !  
Then, return our Acadian way,  
For our days of delight were too few —  
Many Happy Returns of the Day !

## L'ENVOI.

Now an easy enigma or two  
This ballade is devised to convey.  
Unto you, and us lonely ones too,  
Many Happy Returns of the Day !

TO S—— M——.

*The disciple of Master Herrick returneth thanks for the gift of a band of  
pansies for his hat.*

I.

NEVER poet  
From Musæus down,  
Crowned with rose, or myrtle-wreath, or laurel,  
Had of daintier hand  
Dearer trophy!  
Therefore (know it,  
Castaly! and, Daphne's lover, quarrel!)  
I for crown  
Flout the bay and wear thy pansy-band,  
Mistress Sophie.

II

As these petals  
Die not,  
So the thought that settles  
Softly in the purple petals  
Fly not!



Half a memory, which a world of men  
Can buy not, —  
Half a prayer, that till we meet again  
Thou sigh not !

*LA BELLE TROMBONISTE.*

How grave she sits and toots  
In the glare !  
From her dainty bits of boots  
To her hair  
Not the sign remotest shows  
If she either cares or knows  
How the beer-imbibing beaux  
Sit and stare.

They're most prodigal with sighs,  
Or they laugh ;  
Or they cast adoring eyes  
As they quaff.  
They exert their every wile  
Her attention to beguile.  
Do they ever win a smile ?  
Not by half !

*La Belle Tromboniste.*

She leans upon her chin  
    (Not a toot!),  
While the leading violin  
    And the flute  
Wail and plead in low duet  
    That it may be, eyes are wet.  
She her trombone doth forget —  
    She is mute.

The music louder grows ;  
    She's awake !  
She applies her lips and blows —  
    Goodness sake ! . . . . .  
To think that such a peal  
From such throat and frame ideal,  
From such tender lips could steal —  
    *Takes the cake !*

The dinning cymbals shrill  
    Kiss and clash.  
Drum and kettle-drum at will  
    Roll and crash.  
But that trombone over all

*La Belle Tromboniste.*

129

Toots unto my heart a call ; —  
Maid petite, and trombone tall —  
*It's a mash !*

Yet, I hesitate — for lo,  
What a pout !  
She's poetic ; and I know  
I am stout.  
In her little room would she  
On her trombone, tenderly,  
Sit and toot as thus to me ? —  
Ah, I doubt !

*THE POET IS BIDDEN TO MANHATTAN  
ISLAND.*

DEAR Poet, quit your shady lanes  
And come where more than lanes are shady.  
Leave Phyllis to the rustic swains  
And sing some Knickerbocker lady.  
O hither haste, and here devise  
Divine *ballades* before unuttered.  
Your poet's eyes *must* recognize  
The side on which your bread is buttered !

Dream not I tempt you to forswear  
One pastoral joy, or rural frolic.  
I call you to a city where  
The most urbane are most bucolic.  
'Twill charm your poet's eyes to find  
Good husbandmen in brokers burly ; —  
Their stock is ever on their mind ;  
To water it they rise up early.

*The Poet Bidden to Manhattan Island.* 131

Things you have sung, but ah, not seen —  
Things proper to the age of Saturn —  
Shall greet you here ; for we have been  
Wrought quaintly, on the Arcadian pattern.  
Your poet's lips will break in song  
For joy, to see at last appearing  
The bulls and bears, a peaceful throng,  
While a lamb leads them — to the shearing !

And metamorphoses, of course,  
You'll mark in plenty, *à la* Proteus :  
A bear become a little horse —  
Presumably from too much throat-use !  
A thousandfold must go untold ;  
But, should you miss your farm-yard sunny,  
And miss your ducks and drakes, behold  
We'll make you ducks and drakes — of money !

Greengrocers here are fairly read.  
And should you set your heart upon them,  
We lack not beets — but some are dead,  
While others have policemen on them.  
And be the dewfall dear to you,  
Possess your poet's soul in patience !

132    *The Poet Bidden to Manhattan Island.*

Your *notes* shall soon be falling dew, —  
Most mystical of transformations !

Your heart, dear Poet, surely yields ;  
And soon you'll leave your uplands flowery,  
Forsaking fresh and bowery fields,  
For "pastures new" — upon the Bowery !  
You've piped at home, where none could pay,  
Till now, I trust, your wits are riper.  
Make no delay, but come this way,  
And pipe for them that pay the piper !

*THE BLUE VIOLET.*

BLOSSOM that spread'st, as spring brings in  
Her sudden flights of swallows,  
Thy nets of blue, cool-meshed and thin,  
In rain-wet pasture hollows, —

Thronging the dim grass everywhere  
Amid thy heart-leaves tender,  
Thy temperate fairness seems more fair  
Even than August's splendor !

Yet do I hear complaints of thee, —  
Men doubting of thy fragrance !  
But, Dear, thou hast revealed to me  
That shyest of perfume-vagrants.



*The Blue Violet.*

Do ever so, my Flower discreet,  
And all the world be fair to,  
While men but guess that rarest sweet  
Which one alone can swear to!

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